

REMARKS

Favorable reconsideration of this application, in light of the preceding amendments and following remarks, is respectfully requested.

Claims 1, 3-15, 17-24 and 28 are pending. Claims 1, 3-6, 15, 17 and 23 are amended.

Claims 2, 16 and 25-27 are cancelled.

Initially, Applicants respectfully note that a Notice of Appeal was filed for this application on March 31, 2006. However, Applicants are submitting this Amendment based on the understanding as explained below that these Amendments place this Application in condition for formal allowance.

ALLOWABLE SUBJECT MATTER

Applicants note with appreciation the indication in the October 31, 2005 Office Action that claims 2-10, 16, 17, and 27 would be allowable if rewritten to overcome the rejections under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, set forth in the Office Action and to include all the limitations of the base claim and any intervening claims.

Further, Applicants thank Examiner Cindy Nguyen for the telephone interview granted Applicants' representative on March 22, 2006. During the interview, the Examiner agreed to reissue an Advisory Action indicating that the 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, rejections included in the October 31, 2005 Office Action were overcome by the Amendment submitted January 31, 2006 and that claims 2-10, 16, 17 and 27 are only objected to.

In light of the telephone interview and the indication of allowable subject matter in claims 2-10, 16, 17 and 27 included in the Office Action mailed October 31, 2005, Applicants have rewritten the objected to claims in independent form. In particular, amended claim 1 corresponds to dependent claim 2 rewritten in independent form; claims 3 and 4 are rewritten in independent form; amended independent claim 15 corresponds to dependent

claim 16 rewritten in independent form; and amended claim 23 corresponds to dependent claim 27 rewritten in independent form.

In light of the above amendments, Applicants respectfully submit that all of the rejections included in the October 31, 2005 Office Action have been overcome or rendered moot.

Accordingly, Applicants respectfully submit that independent claims 1, 3, 4, 15 and 23, and claims 4-14, 17-22, 24 and 28 depending therefrom, are in condition for formal allowance.

CONCLUSION

Accordingly, in view of the above amendments and remarks, reconsideration of the objections and rejections and allowance of each of the pending claims of the present application is earnestly solicited.

Should there be any outstanding matters that need to be resolved in the present application, the Examiner is respectfully requested to contact John A. Castellano at the telephone number of the undersigned below.

If necessary, the Commissioner is hereby authorized in this, concurrent, and future replies, to charge payment or credit any overpayment to Deposit Account No. 08-0750 for any additional fees required under 37 C.F.R. § 1.16 or under 37 C.F.R. § 1.17; particularly, extension of time fees.

Respectfully submitted,

HARNESS, DICKEY, & PIERCE, P.L.C.

By

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